PETER NOT INFALLIBLE!

OR,

A POEM,

ADDRESSED TO

PETER PINDAR, ESQ.

ON READING HIS

NIL ADMIRARI,

A LATE ILLIBERAL

ATTACK ON THE BISHOP OF LONDON;

TOGETHER WITH UNMANLY

ABUSE of Mrs. HANNAH MORE.

ALSO

LINES

OCCASIONED BY HIS ODE TO SOME ROBIN RED-BREASTS IN A COUNTRY CATHEDRAL.

By the Author of Gleanings after Thomſon, or the Village Muſe, &c.

I TOO AM A POET!

Cambridge,

PRINTED BY M. WATSON,

AND SOLD BY

CHAPPLE, CADELL AND DAVIES, AND RIVINGTONS, LONDON; AND THE BOOKSELLERS IN YORK, BRISTOL, OXFORD, AND CAMBRIDGE.

1800.

1746 3.19.8.22

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Volo ſe efferat in adolescentia fœcunditas. Audeat hæc ætas plura, et inveniat, et inventis gaudeat, ſint licet illa non ſatis interim ſicca et ſevera. Facile remedium eſt ubertatis, ſterilia nullo labore vincuntur. QUINCTILIAN.

In youth I wiſh to ſee luxuriance of Imagination appear. At this time of life let Genius be bold and inventive, and pride itſelf in its efforts, though theſe ſhould not as yet be correct. Luxuriancy can eaſily be cured; but for *barrenneſs* there is no remedy.

THE CHALLENGE.

"*Miſs Hannah More having, with* unmerited *severity, attacked the poor Poets*"---THE CAP SURELY FITTED, AND PETER PUT IT ON.---"*I have* meekly *made my complaint in poetical expostulation, hoping she will vouchsafe me an answer to justify the* slander, *or &c.*" P. P.

DREAD PETER!

I Think I see thee smile at this formal invitation to a duel, exclaiming, with a mixture of pity and contempt, "Am I not the Hercules of the day, who, without my club or lion's ſkin, can crush this daring upstart to the dust with my very thumb, or smother him in the hollow of my hand?" But ſoftly, 'Squire Peter—if there be such inequality of might and mental prowess in the combatants, there is at least as much, in an *inverse ratio**, as to the juſtice of their cauſe; ſo that, upon the whole, the bets may be equal. For the Britiſh Public are, at this moment, with one voice, giving thee the lie. And tho' they do not deny thee to fill the chair of Ariſtarchus with conſiderable credit, when thine eyes are purged from the film of prejudice, and the yellow tinge of envy; yet they say thou art no more an heir of thy name-ſake St. Peter, or the Pope, as to their *infallibility*, than firſt couſin to the Moon.

* The Author is doatingly fond of *Analytics*, Peter.

Now; though the writer's sole ambition be, at present, to get a pinch perhaps at thy great toe, yet soon, thank the fates! comes a day which is to liberate him from his mathematical apprenticeship; and then *(credite, posteri!)* he will not hesitate to take the field, and exchange as many blows with thee, as thou shalt *aim* thrusts at the bosom of Innocence and Virtue. Nor will the task be so difficult, though both ability and inclination to pay thee in thine own coin be wanting. For Truth neither needs the eloquence of a brothel, the cowardly weapons of abuse, nor even the gaudy trappings of ornament, to prepossess her judges in her favour. However, if thy modesty is not hurt by so harsh an expression, let even the Devil have his due. Nor can the writer doubt but thou wilt give him *his*, if he be so far honoured as to become the burden of thy undiscriminating satire,

"Whose ink can *never* blot the vest of snow."

First then, he very willingly allows thee whatever claims thou mayst bring forward as a brother Poet, even so far as to acknowledge the picture drawn by thyself to be a just one—"That thou *canst be* this moment an eagle, sublimely sweeping the heavens with his pinions, and the very next a little wren, sweetly twittering among the humble myrtles.' And if, when thou condescendest to stoop from those eagle flights, thou maintainedst the *innocence* of the wren among the myrtle bushes; or spent thine ably-pointed quivers of Satire on nothing but Infidelity, Vice, and Folly, by showering them on our PAINES and our GODWINS, instead of dipping them in rancour for a PORTEUS or a MORE, this would in reality constitute thee a "Poetical star of the first magnitude." The writer would then very willingly take thee for his pattern, and invoke thee as his guide. But, as it is, he is obliged to declare thee a rebel from the Muses. And though he is not so vain as to hope, that so old and hardened a Sinner will return to his allegiance at the bare admonition of an *ungraduated* corporal of Parnassus, yet he is again determined, should no awkward frosts come,

and nip ambition in the bud, that thou shalt soon have even a smart tap from his cane, when perhaps he is captain in the corpse.

Nor let the great GOLIATH menace, with a sneer, that he will give little DAVID's *bones to the beasts of the field, and his flesh to the fowls of the air.* For thou, who art so able a trumpeter of thine own fame, canst not accuse him of impudence, if he say, that, when lately kneeling with the firstling of his Muse before the Analytical Review, the oracle even of Jacobinism pronounced "Marks of talents, capable of being matured into excellence." And those hardy champions on the other side of the question have lately sent their friendly *compliments*, desiring to see his face again*. Therefore, as the fire of Genius is said to have broke out in one of our most eminent artists on seeing some famous piece of the immortal RAPHAEL, which made him exclaim, in the height of enthusiasm, *I too am a painter!* so I have ventured to remind thee, that *I too am a Poet!*

* See the Antijacobin Rev. for Sep. 99. &c. Art. "Gleanings after Thomson."

THE COMPLAINT.

BUT, O! PETER, that Christmas Holidays lasted all the year! perhaps it will be the calends of next January before thou receiveſt another Christmas box from the Muse. She, who, like thy great enemy, St. Dunſtan, was about to get old Satan by the nose with her red-hot tongs, is herself to have a gag put in her rebel mouth, for thus bewitching the writer with her Syren tongue, who, with COTES and WARING, is this moment, without genius, without inclination, going to ſum an infinite series and extract an impossible root. In short, perhaps thou haſt little to dread from thy brethren here; for thou wilt as soon find a crocodile among the willows of father Camus, as a poet on his banks. Those "robin-red-breasts of the Human race," like yon cricket on my chimney-top, chirping his last song to the winds, with tears in his eyes this miserable morning, have long ago been starved to death, poor souls! An haughty pampered gentlewoman, named Mathesis, who, it must be confessed, is a Lady of considerable merit in her place, has always been *deaf to the voice of the charmer*, even of a GRAY or a MASON, *charm they never so sweetly!*

Yes, I know thou wilt pity us, PETER. For think thou art wedded to that cherub *Sensibility*, sweet saint! with a tear in one eye and a smile in the other—and that thy soul is set on fire by the ungovernable sallies of an enthusiastic *Imagination*—think thou art thus climbing in chains the frowning hill of *abstruse* mathematics (where the very *arcana* of plus and minus rivet young Ambition to the dust) that hill which presents indeed to a favoured few the delightful paths of Genius, Immortality, Affluence and Honour; but to thee the dry husks of disgust and despair!—think too,

that, with a *single smile* of approbation, thou couldst be Jove's "eagle, sublimely sweeping the Heavens with his pinions, or the tuneful little wren, twittering among the myrtles"---yet think that this favoured and too often scornful few, to whom Nature, pointing to their NEWTON's bust, exclaimed, *sic itur ad astra!* think, I say, that these ALONE are suffered to reap the fair fields of Renown! And then tell me, wouldst thou not *petition* for a *more equal distribution of the laurel?* and, with Pope in his Dunciad, honestly *complain* of those, who not only "Full in the midst of *Euclid*," (this, nay more than this, is a salutary pill, and Master Pope was no Mathematician) but who

> "Full in the midst of *Waring* dip at once,
> "And petrify a Genius to a dunce!"

Yes, PETER, thou wouldst do more than this---since then *(detis veniam, Judices!)* there is a small gripe of *folly**, even on this consecrated spot, quite ripe for thine hand, and since thou mightest elsewhere have plenteously filled thy sickle, why vainly strive to cloud the face of a noon-tide sun, by blackening the reputation of Virtue? But this is a question we come at length to ask, in language less jocose, and more becoming the inquiry. Not in the boasted pomp of *Pindaric* ode, but in numbers *imitative* of those to which Alma Mater once listened with delight---those which MILTON sung, and wherewith PORTEUS "sooth'd the dull, cold ear of *Death*."

Dabam apud Cantab. 21 *days after our Christmas Examination*, 1800.

* See a beautiful little Satire, entitled "*Follies* of Cambridge,"—a sensible Letter to the Senate, by the Author of "Discourses to Academic Youth"—The Sizar, a Rhapsody, though the writer seems to be somewhat under the dominion of Lunar influence—See also Strictures on the Discipline of the University, &c. &c. &c. hear also *Academus, Decanus, &c. &c. &c.—Una omnibus sententia, nemine contradicente.*

A

POEM,

&c.

WHAT tho' the Muſe, at Alma Mater's call,
Quits Fancy's fields, and lays her reed aſide?
What tho', to ſtern Philoſophy devote,
Her ſons ne'er deign the fancy-foſtering ſmile,
To plume Imagination's daring wing,
And tempt divine Ambition, bluſhing zeal,
To ſpurn low thought, and mount her native ſkies?
What tho' no patron ſtrings her heaven-taught lyre,
And patient liſtens to her eaſy lay?
Tho' Matheſis her elder ſiſter's right
Uſurp, and triumph in the fair-one's fall?
Tho' high inſulting the proud rival ſtand,
And ſnatch that palm, the voice of ages gave,
Still ſhall ſhe ſlumber, with inglorious tears,
When MORE and PORTEUS feel the laſh of vice,

And Virtue kindles, tho' her children ſmile?
O! thou, who, midſt the countleſs wrecks of time,
Haſt walk'd the round of Immortality;
Who, with a maſter's hand, a Seraph's flame,
To poliſh'd Greece didſt ſtrike the Theban lyre:
Say, when cold diſappointment damp'd the lay,
And meagre envy dim'd the jaundic'd eye;
When little malice whiſper'd mean revenge,
And wrapt in diſcord every venom'd wire;
Say, didſt thou ruſh the lion of the throng
With other madneſs than the Muſe inſpires?
Leap, ruffian-like, on Order's ſacred lap;
Snatch too the ſceptre of his rightful ſway,
And lay the *Monarch* level with the clown?
No! not for this we venerate thy name,
And PINDAR lives for ever in his lay.
Bluſh, WOOLCOT, bluſh, if yet a bluſh remain,
Or e'er thy cheek the modeſt ſtranger knew,
Not that thou call'ſt the Theban Sage thy ſire,
(Thou want'ſt but virtue to make good thy claim)
But tell me, why did laviſh nature cull
Her choiceſt ſhoots of intellectual growth,

Then bounteous bid the mental wreath be thine?
That Syren, Song, the luxury of Thought,
The daring flights of heaven-ward Fancy's wing,
That plumes the poet, and that ſoars with thee?
This bullion, blazing from the mines of heav'n,
To a choice few th' OECONOMIST above
Nicely infus'd, from crucibles divine,
To poliſh life; and, by its friendly beams,
To point the truant virtues to their ſky?
Why then, with treaſon to great Nature's law,
Shouldſt, Woolcot, thou mix Folly's baſe alloy?
Why meanly bid the bluſhing Muſe purſue
Thoſe themes, where Virtue flies, with ſcorn, the page?
Why in our youth the guſts of paſſion ſwell,
And fluſh to crimſon *Pudicaſta's* cheek?
Wit, too, and Satire's keen pervading eye,
Th' Almighty join'd with Laughter, light of heart,
To ſcourge the vice and follies of Mankind.
Why then is brainleſs Ridicule let looſe
Where Malice drives, where ſquinting Envy lours,
Why Vice and Virtue undiſtinguiſh'd prey?
But, ah! (what foul revolt!) why dip in gall

Thoſe arrows lent thee in the Godhead's cauſe;
Then mock his rites, his oracles blaſpheme,
T'exhauſt th' envenom'd quiver on his throne?
Sure Folly's track no ſcanty harveſt yields,
And Vice, black Vice, with impudence of mien,
Now lords it in the zenith of her power.
Why then, apoſtate from th' indignant Muſe!
On bright Religion break th' untimely jeſt?
And make the little virtue we can boaſt
The butt and ceaſeleſs burden of thy ſong?
Yes, what has PORTEUS, what the virtuous MORE
E'er done, that greatly thus provokes thy ſpleen?
Porteus, whom Virtue, from the Muſes' haunts
Selecting, lifted to her mitred chair,
The ſure and brighteſt pillar of her throne.
This but an echo of the Public Voice,
And which e'en Pindar dares not flattery call.
More too, bright pattern to the Britiſh Fair,
Who ſtill with judgment clear, unſullied truth,
In native eaſe and winning Fancy dreſt,
The ſacred cauſe of Innocence maintains,
Say, whence the grand offence, that merits thus

Th' unmanly ſcourge of inſolence and wit?
What! vent thy malice on a female bard?
Look on with ſmiles, *ſhould* Reputation die,
Or clouds obſcure that ſun-beam to the ſoul,
Then "on the ſighs of merit feaſt thine ear?"
Yes, MORE, who, bleſt with every mental worth
That claims regard, or dignifies the Fair,
Deigns, ſtooping low, to lift the cottage latch,
And preach her moral leſſons to the ſwain.
'Tis here ſhe ſees the rural virtues bloom,
Plants of her hand, and foſter'd by her care.
See'ſt thou yon pair, whom gentle ſtars decree
In Love's ſweet wiles to wear each other's yoke?
Leander, pride of all the village youth,
Leads happy Lucy to the nuptial ſhrine,
With throbbing pulſe, and bluſhful as the cheek
Of modeſt dawn, that early came to peep
Along the lowly lattice of the ſwain,
To light him quick to ſnatch his rural robes,
And ſend her bounding ſhepherd to the fold.
Aſk you what ſchool the happy couple rear'd?
What ſage's precepts, or example kind,

Bade him be conſtant, or taught her to love?
Each ſiſter nymph and fellow ſwain can ſay,
'Twas MORE and ſimple Nature ſchool'd the pair.
Juſt drawn the curtain of the World's wide ſtage,
See, in freſh ſcenes each acts an humble part.
Led by the *ſame* kind hand, and taught to bear
With dauntleſs front the perils of the ſtorm,
Should clouds come ſcowling o'er their vernal ſun,
Their little bark ſets ſail. Say, what ſhall harm,
Content, and Love, and Induſtry aboard?
While Patience, ſmiling on the reſtleſs ſurge,
Sits at the helm, deals out th' obedient line,
Eyes orient Hope, fair dawning thro' the clouds,
And gives the rocking pinnace to the gale.
  Propitious let the rural Genius ſmile,
And favour thoſe, whom Love hath favour'd ſo.
Too oft, alas! their iron-hearted lords,
Unmindful of the toilſome horny Hand
That lays the bed of Luxury, and gives
The bowl to ſparkle, and the jeſt run high:
Too oft, alas! they nip the nuptial bud
Of bliſs, juſt grafted from two hearts in one,

And cruel give to Poverty the Pair.
O! would'ſt thou, More, this other taſk aſſume,
And make our hamlets *bleſt* as well as *good*:
Bid Senſibility's ſoft dew-drop ſhine;
And Fancy pour her philtres round the heart;
Call forth the finer feelings of the ſoul;
And make our thanes the fathers of their cots.
Think, O! think, each village matron ſues,
While farms to farms are laid, whole hamlets lent
To load with wealth ſome undeſerving clown;
Nor left one little field, an envied ſtore!
To nurſe fair Plenty to the cottage hind.
No cow's his lot, that bleſſing to the ſwain!
Sole bleſſing, nurſe of all his family,
Of ſhock, or puſs, his grandſon, and his ſpouſe.
One little field his utmoſt wiſhes bounds;
To huſband this, his leiſure hours afford,
Nor ſtay the ſhuttle, nor a neighbour's plow.
O! would ſome patriot, born to bleſs mankind,
Search, like great Howard, thro' yon weeping glooms,
Where not a root befriends their wretched board,
And ſcarce a woodbine bloſſoms on the wall:

O! would he fence the moſſy manſion round
With peace and plenty, and the *rented* roods
Their grand-ſires plow'd, and cruel Avarice ſtole.
Give back the baniſh'd cow her loſt domain,
And throw her grunting friend his milky meal;
Hence would each mother bring her children bread,
Breathe her laſt prayer in Gratitude's low voice,
And liſping tongues aſk bleſſings on his head*.

* The writer could not paſs by a favourite ſcheme, without repeating his earlieſt ſentiments on the ſubject ("Gleanings after Thomſon," &c.) even though hereafter he intends to pay it that attention which its importance demands. Perhaps too, one who never paſſes a Village without gleaning information on the caſe, is not the leaſt qualified for its diſcuſſion. From different routs between Cambridge and the North, &c he is more and more convinced that the calamities of the *Village* Poor are entirely owing to the Grievance above hinted at. With what indignation then has he ſeen "Large Farms recommended!" However, he is for no abſurd *equalization*—let not then the ſighs of Millions be huddled under the ſtandard of that bugbear, *Reform*. The Syſtem is ſimply that each cottager (the cit muſt not underſtand *this* of the Metropolis or a Birmingham) have as much grouud as will maintain a Cow and Pig, and afford a little incloſure for a garden. Neither is it to be doubted but that out of this Neceſſity would appropriate to herſelf ſometimes a rood for bread-corn. Thus, his hours of avocation from holding the plow, or tending the flock of his more opulent neighbour, would be ſpent in the delightful employment of cultivating his little Paradiſe. His wages too ought more than to ſatisfy the demands of his Landlord. And milk, which ſtrung the ſinews of our forefathers, the ſmutty flitch, and the friendly potatoe, would conſtantly be a feaſt for his frugal family at home. Away then from our Villages the boaſted pomp and incumbrance of a workhouſe, thoſe priſon-houſes to poverty! where many a couple are immured in the moſt ignominious dependency, forbid to breathe the common air and uſe their own limbs. Who, had they been the happy tenants of a cottage and a croft, would have ſeen their ſun of liſe go down in frugal independence—yes, a milk-pail, the wicker chair, and the ſmutted flitch, ſmiling in my face, even theſe, when I can ſay they are "mine," afford ſuch an honeſt exultation of heart, as the luxurious Maſter of the hamlet knows not.

We have Farms of the unwieldy bulk of ſome thouſand Acres—we have Moors that deform the ſurface of half the Iſland, and which have not perhaps felt the ſhare ſince the deluge, ſurely then thoſe rural Genii, the Board of Agriculture, Agricultural Societies, &c. are planting human happineſs there!

*BC75.

But whither wanders the too vagrant Muſe?
Smit with the theme, her darling theme, to ſee
In all its bliſs her parent hamlet ſmile,
She tells no more how graceleſs PINDAR raves;
How MORE preſides the preacher of the dale,
And kindly lectures all the ſwains in love,
Be witneſs LUCY and LEANDER's flame.
Meantime, their gentle offspring, prattling round,
Call forth, unheard before, great Nature's voice,
The charities of father, mother, child.
O! come ye, whom this rural ſight can charm;
Who, form'd to happy uniſon of ſoul,
Unlike the little ſelfiſh ſons of earth,
Can ſhare in all the bliſs of all mankind!
For you the poet touch'd a finer ſtring,
Feels his heart warm to ſee thoſe eyes o'erflow,
That, gliſtening, beam ſuch ſympathy of joy.

No, they are teaching Œconomy to the Swain, when he has not a loaf to eat. While others, who perhaps never ſaw a plow but on paper, are gravely preaching that every farmer ſhould be a Chymiſt, to analyſe his own ſoil by philoſophical experiment, before he ſows a ſeed or plants a potatoe. Know, ye Maros of the day, *Experience* teaches better things, and bids her plain diſciple ſmile.

Oh! had WOOLCOT choſe ſo fair a field of Satire; or, MORE, thou art making them virtuous, make them happy—When Senſibility *finds the lacerated lamb of another's flock, ſhe cries, O! had I come one moment ſooner, it bleeds to death! While her gentle heart bleeds with it.*

See then the happy parent from the plow
Met by his ſmiling, fond-inquiring boy,
The future rich poſſeſſor of his all,
Heir of his father's virtue and his toils.
And now the ſimple partner of his heart,
In ruſſet robes, thoſe trophies of her care,
The well-us'd ſpindle leaves, and ſoon prepares
That board which ſmokes with innocence and health.
But now, the labours of the day perform'd,
Domeſtic bliſs ſits ſmiling on each brow.
This climbs the knee, and, chiding, gains at laſt,
In conſcious pride, the hearty, long embrace:
Then crowns his young ambition with a kiſs,
That ſtruck to extaſy each parent's ſoul.
E'en honeſt Tray, while humbly cowering low,
Conteſts his claim, to gain at leaſt a ſmile.
At length the time for ſage inſtruction comes:
'Tis MORE too preaches to th' unletter'd groupe,
Who makes all Nature vouch for NATURE'S LORD;
Bids Earth and Ocean, Calms and Whirlwinds ſay,
What hand, in ſecret, wheels the vaſt machine.
But, hark! the maſter, from his wicker throne,

With uncouth voice and many a ſtammering pauſe,
In ſimple tales his little charge harangues,
While plain beneath they glean the moral told.
Methinks I ſee him bending o'er his taſk,
His honeſt front high-fluſh'd with ſecret joy:
But when he ſees the wonders of his lore,
Ideas dawning in his offspring's breaſt
Like plants, that ope their petals to the ſun,
His tears, faſt-falling, blot the dizzy "tract,"
The man of letters puzzling more and more,
And yet he ſimply wonders why he weeps.
Methinks I ſee them, leaning on his lap,
With eyes that feaſt upon the ſpeaker's lip,
Smile as he ſmiles, then weep, and ſmile again.
Sweet was the ſound that ſtruck on Fancy's ear!
She heard the little babbler on the breaſt
Firſt liſp its MAKER, then the name of MORE*.

* So far relates to "that infinity of little religious tracts, by Mrs. MORE, which are calculated to comfort the lower orders of ſociety in this world, and to ſave them in the next.—Which alſo have contributed very eſſentially to counteract the poiſon of thoſe impious and immoral pamphlets, diſperſed over the kingdom, in ſuch numbers, by ſocieties of Infidels and Republicans.—Of theſe, not leſs than two millions were ſold in the firſt year!" *See the Biſhop of London's charge.*

What follows relates to her "Strictures on Female Education." A work on which the public are at preſent ſo laudably laviſh of praiſe and patronage, and which amply juſtifies the well-intended and well merited encomiums of his Lordſhip.

Yet not alone ſhe lectures to the ſwain,
But charms, in Fancy's garb, with equal eaſe,
As PORTEUS tells, the cottage or the court.
Haſte then, thou goddeſs of the laughing eye,
And leave the Paphian for the Britiſh groves.
O! come, and lead the pomp of Albion's dames;
(Firſt in thy care, and foremoſt to thy ſhrine,)
Lead the bright beauties of the Queen of iſles
Submiſs to hear the "Strictures" of their MORE.
Come, *Pudicaſta!* lay the landſkip by,
What tho' the Graces mingle in thy train,
And every geſture ſhoots the ſhaft of Love?
Believe thy bard, tho' Innocence, enthron'd,
Like Luna, beams perſuaſion from thoſe lids,
The Muſe of Briſtol ſhall not preach in vain.
See! the ſoft pomp proceeds—each planet ſheds,
In tokens bland, her hallow'd influence down.
Hence! ye prophane: hence Diſſipation's din,
"The reeling goddeſs with the zoneleſs waiſt."
And, hark! ye youths, the ſweetly-bluſhing train
At once ſecure the virgin's ſlacken'd zone,
And pour their bribes on Folly's lap no more.

*2075.W830

See Hymen's injur'd rites at length reſtor'd:
The goddeſs of the ſmiles, unenvying, ſees
Each votary ſhine a Venus in our eyes.
That faireſt flower that weaves the nuptial wreath,
DOMESTIC VIRTUE, bloſſoms on each brow:
And vindicates the empire of the heart,
That long-loſt charter of the Britiſh fair!
Auſpicious morn! that ſees the duteous maid
Alternate kneel to Induſtry and Love:
Spring from the nurſe's to a lover's arms,
E'en fit to be a mother in her teens.
  Nor think, ye fair, your MORE ſhall ever leave
The Virtues coldly wedded to the Loves,
To weep their ſiſter Graces harſhly ſpurn'd
To ſeek their ancient ſeat in Attic lands.
Forbid it, Heaven! ſtill ſhall the pencil lend
The canvas life: ſtill ſhall the magic bluſh
Lead Love's ſly mazes in the virgin dance:
O! warble ſtill the ſighing lute to love.
Not as of old, on Cam's tranſlucent wave,
In cloiſters grey, that nurs'd this midnight page,
(Snatch'd from thoſe moments, hateful to the Muſe,

Which yet ne'er dawn'd unclouded with deſpair!)
Ere yet an "Age of Reaſon" burſt the gloom,
And monkiſh Ignorance and hooded Vice,
Unable to withſtand the beams of Truth,
From ſainted fiends, and ſhrines polluted, crept,
And ſordid cells, more ſanctified than they.
'Twas here the matron, trite, repenting, mournd'
Her ſins of youth, and told the beaded ſtring.
And, tho' untaſted the "unlicens'd bliſs,"
The blooming virgin pin'd, her ſweets unknown,
And robb'd the world of half that world ſhould prize.
Like Spring's firſt cowſlip on the frowning cliff,
For which, in vain, the love-ſick ſhepherd ſighs,
To deck on May-day morn ſome village toaſt.
Or, ah! ye nymphs, who trim the ſacred fires,
And guard, in myſtic faith, Loretto's ſhrine,
Perhaps of Veſta's train no Veſtal ſhe;
But wing'd love's lightening thro' the friar's cell,
Glanc'd from the veil, a cruel parent gave,
Or pouting diſappointment, or deſpair,
That vainly ſmother'd ſuch a blaze of charms.

Thus, WOOLCOT, haſt thou told the world ſo long,
The ſureſt teſt of Virtue is thy ſpleen:
And ſnatch'd (O! *bluſh*) from her and from her MORE
The well-earn'd wreath, approving PORTEUS gave,
For brows, that wiſely *ſcorn to bluſh*, like thee.
Yes, ſee, ye fair, whom female Honour guides,
Who yet ne'er ſoil'd the lilies on her veſt,
See PINDAR's lovely catalogue of ſaints.
Firſt GODWIN, wild in Amazonian grace,
With cheek that frights the timid Loves away,
Fluſh'd, only fluſh'd with politics and wine,
Leads all her *new philoſophers* along,
Where female Folly's ſtandard, heav'd on high,
Waves "PROSTITUTION," flaming in the van.
Silent thro' moon-light labyrinths they ſtray,
As beſt befits the myſtic rites they ſeek
Of *female treaſon*, and unhallow'd fires.
But, hark! the Dame, in maſculine array,
With outſtretch'd arm, and ſun-burnt boſom bare,
Her daughters ſummons, and harangues the crowd.
While bluſhing Luna leans behind her car,
And ſiſter fiends, unnotic'd, mix with kin,

T' improve in morals, and inſtruct their ſire.
And, lo! *illumin'd* with new light, at once
The "ſex's weakneſs" they diſcard, and claim
Their ſhare of rule with proud uſurping *Man*.
And firſt the bluſh, that failing in the fair,
Nay blemiſh too, with modeſty expires.
Forbear, ye youths (a taſk you'd rather ſhun)
Forbear the gentle offices, which erſt,
In gallant ſuit, ye tender'd to the Fair,
Nor more inſult them with a *Woman's* name.
For, know, the nymph, whoſe frowning hand you claſp'd,
T' enthrone, all anxious, on the ſaddled ſteed,
Was *meant*, like you, to wear Bellona's plume,
Mid neighing files, far gleaming in the ſun,
And conquer at a battle or a ball.

But mark who this way eager bend their courſe,
Nor wonder if a band of lovers hie,
(To *kneel* is needleſs, Liberty is Love)
And, ardent, *ſeize* ſuch excellence of charms.
Thrice happy PETER! what if envious Time
Plants his grey honours on thy tonſur'd brow,

Still, with thy ſacred toga* rent around,
Like mad-brain'd brothers on the banks of Cam,
Still come (nor firſt nor laſt of inmates there)
A welcome gueſt unto thy GODWIN's arms.
Inconſtant both? But ſuch the mutual wiſh,
And ſo your *new Philoſophy* decrees.
  Sad ſacrifice of female honour this!
But more than this the Muſe, reluctant, ſings.
Ev'n in that ſex, whoſe gentler breaſts ſhould heave
With no fierce tumult, ſave the lover's ſigh,
Mid theſe, dark Faction tells her goſſip tale,
In league with France fair Freedom to entomb.
While Infidelity's aſſaſſins lurk
To murder ſouls, or ſink them in deſpair.
Yet WOLCOT becks the dire banditti on,
And ſmiles, complacent, o'er his country's tomb:
Whoſe Muſe of fire ſhould dart on Folly's throne,
Her numbers lightening thro' the cave of Guilt
With each a poniard for the Dæmon's breaſt,
To drag the monſter, grinning, into day.
  So when of old, collecting all their might,

* 'Tis ſaid the *ſinner* is in *Holy* Orders!

The zeal of Rome, and Hell, and Fawkes exclaim'd,
" This deſperate effort more, and all is loſt!"
Satan his pupil ſons, well-pleas'd, aſſiſts,
Tho ſurely prickt to find, his earthly ſons,
So apt, could teach him in his own device.—
Britannia's prince and ſenate now had met,
Her ſages planning for the public weal,
When, horrid to relate! the nitrous maſs,
And ſecret train, awaited but the touch
Of other element, when, all at once,
Prince, ſenators and palace, country, all,
The dire exploſion hurls them to the moon!
But PROVIDENCE, whoſe never-ſlumbering eye
Each moment darts thro' nature at a glance,
Then ſnatch'd thee, Britain, from the jaws of fate.
Lo! the black junto in contention plead,
So glorious was the fact! whoſe impious graſp,
The good old father, or a popiſh ſon,
Should hold the fatal brand—when thro' the air
(Some MORE or PORTEUS of the ſkies their guide)
Exulting Seraphs clap th' upbraiding wing,
And hiſs the bluſhing fiends to hell again!

LINES

OCCASIONED BY

PETER PINDAR'S

ALMOST BLASPHEMOUS

ABUSE OF SACRED MUSIC.

THINK, Reader, thou art entering ſome venerable Cathedral, when, on a ſudden, the majeſtic organ peals Devotion thro' the dome, and bears thy ſoul along with her in divine enthuſiaſm to the ſkies. While a company of innocent children, in garments of ſnow, that are fit emblems of the purity of their ſouls, are chaunting, at ſolemn intervals, the ſtrains of Jeſſe's ſon. When, lo! in dreadful viſit, ſome fiend peeps from the gloomy cloiſter, to mix in horrid ſmiles the yell of blaſphemy, as he mutters execrations of revenge!—Think thus, and what are thy feelings? Nearly ſuch were mine, on peruſing what is innocently called, "An Ode to ſome robin-red-breaſts in a country Cathedral."

The ſcene of the former part of theſe Lines is ſuppoſed to be in the Author's college chapel. Nothing but the boſom of Senſibility herſelf can form ideas exalted enough of a finely-ſwelling organ preaching devotion to an aſſembly of youths, uniformly clad in veſtments, which are ſometimes, we truſt, even here, the pictures of purity within! An

assembly that are to be the future guardians of their country's Religion, her Liberties and her Laws. The writer always observes a more than usual degree of attention on a surplice or organ evening. And tho', with Beings that are not angels, there must be too often "the sounds which Affectation brays;" yet, if Dr. WOLCOT has ever heard an *hallelujah chorus* in the "Messiah," let him tell me whether it be possible for Dissipation not to pause in her mad career, and the cold, indifferent bosom of Apathy herself not to expand, for once, with the momentary fires of something that borders on Devotion? This, perhaps, is as much as can be said of the Works of a PETER PINDAR. Nay a wreath which can seldom be suspended from the consecrated cushion, as a trophy to the *eloquence of the pulpit*. If then the reputation of such admirable preachers as the Organ and her attendant quire of stripling cherubs—the only ones at least which mix with mankind—if the reputation of these be blasted by a voice that is more than "Tainted with ale, and gin, and eggs, and bacon," a voice tainted by envy, malice and revenge, sure such an one was never rock'd in Fancy's cradle, nor hush'd into the *amabilis insania* with a lullaby from the Muses? Yes, such an one is Dr. WOLCOT! This indeed is more than might be expected from the apathy of the Mother of Mathematics. Tho' it is said of New College in Cambridge (who are some of our first-rate Analytics) that they have disposed of their organ to procure an additional annual feast to the Society. But we leave it to the powers of PETER PINDAR to pay a proper eulogium to their *taste*.

" In proud disdain of what e'en gods adore
" Doſt smile? poor wretch! thy guardian angel weeps."

IS yon the cloiſter's modeſt bell that charms
Each morn the Muſe from ſyren Slumber's arms?
Still friendly chiding till her voice ſhe raiſe
In early matins to her MAKER'S praiſe.
Approach—'tis Man ſhould ſee the hymn begun,
All Nature knelt around the riſing ſun.
And, hark! the organ breathes, with ſeeming pain,
In ſymphony auguſt, the many-mingling ſtrain.
But bolder ſoon her various pipe ſhe ſwells,
And mounting halts where *Sacred Muſic* dwells.
Till now, full-finger'd, undulating, clear,
Burſt her loud thunders on the raviſh'd ear.
A ſolemn pauſe!—anticipating ſong,
The ſoul ſuſpended bears the theme along.
When, ſweet, in chorus full, a cherub train
Of beardleſs minſtrels catch th' alternate ſtrain;
Teach brother angels airs by Handel given,
Whoſe crowding pinions waft each ſound to Heaven.

Ye ſons of Elegance, to whom belong
The ſiſter nymphs of Harmony and Song,
Aſk ye our PINDAR, aſk parnaſſus' owl,
If "ſuch the roar, when Lybia's deſerts howl?
Retract, blaſphemer! Shall the general ſong
Be madly marr'd by one diſcordant tongue?
See giddy Vice for once forgets to ſneer,
Half kneels to Heaven, and lends it half her ear.
E'en Diſſipation's pupil mocks no more,
Tho' Fortune's child, and nurs'd on Granta's ſhore.
The Muſe quick calls the rover, Fancy, home,
That, hallow'd now for once, runs riot thro' the dome.
Devotion's ſelf caſts up her fainted eyes,
Lends the ſoul wings, and lifts her to the ſkies.

Come, WOLCOT, now, and hear a virgin lay,
Where Virtue, Taſte and *Sacred Muſic* ſtray;
Where *Pudicaſta's* penſive labours reſt
With mimic Flora on the ſnowy veſt.
Perhaps, while MORE ſome ſacred truth declare,
She gleans thoſe gems that dignify the Fair.
Or elſe, while ſiſter Muſes ſocial ſing,
With them ſhe ſtrikes to Innocence the ſtring.

And, hark! where FRANCES wakes the trembling wires,
We aſk no Muſe but what her hand inſpires.
Ye nymphs, who nobly never ſtoop to teach
What PINDAR ſings, or PAINE and GODWIN preach;
Who ſtill the ſoftneſs of your ſex revere,
Nor ſcorn the bluſh, and coſt that ſex a tear,
Attend—while bards divine, while Heaven inſpire,
HANDEL's fair pupil leads the veſtal quire.

The ſong begins—and, as "Meſſiah's*" name
Hung on the ſtrings, and ſet each nerve on flame,
Some guardian cherub lean'd from heaven the while,
Whiſpering he ſeem'd, and o'er his charge to ſmile.
Firſt o'er Iſaiah's hallow'd page we ran,
Where, rapt, he ſung Divine Redemption's plan;
And, as the ſeer our ſcheme of Mercy lays,
Young Hope, exulting, trembled into praiſe.
Sure WOLCOT bids be bleſt th' unerring tongue,
The bard that, "Comfort ye my people," ſung:

* Some of theſe lines were writtten on hearing a young lady play part of the Oratorio of the Meſſiah on her Harpſichord. To whoſe correct taſte and urbanity of manners, he confeſſes, with pleaſure, tho' ſhe is by no means a *proſelyte*, that he is indebted for ſome hints in page 24, &c. concerning the *Godwinian Philoſophy*.

Owns other aid than founts of Hippocrene,
And nobly bluſhes o'er the jeſt obſcene.
Sure ſuch a Genius claſps an angel's lyre,
His lips freſh glowing with celeſtial fire:
Lends Heaven his voice, when all of Adam riſe,
And mortals ſwell the concert of the ſkies.

He comes! th' illuſtrious ſtranger comes! who roll'd
Broad yon expanſe, and hung her roofs with gold:
HE comes! ſure Heaven's exhauſted on that day,
And flaming whirlwinds wheel him on his way.
Thus Pride ſuggeſts—the Babe of Bethlehem ſee,
And learn a leſſon from Humility.—
Look here, O! Heaven—Earth, kneel, and, O! be bleſt;
For, know, thy MAKER ſlumbers on thy breaſt!
Tell me, thou ſeraph, what would you adviſe?
Would your harps ring Hoſannahs thro' the ſkies?
Or ſigh your praiſe in heavenly Echo's ear,
And, ſilent, give to Gratitude a tear?
Our Handel, rouſe what Art and Nature can,
And aſk the ſtars, if favour'd thus, like Man?
Warm in our breaſts the ſweet enthuſiaſm raiſe,
While wondering oxen on their MAKER gaze:

While men and gods aſſemble from afar,
And ſtop to liſten with yon "leading ſtar."
Lend, lend your harps, yé angels! prompt the lay;
Ope Heaven's bright portals, that put out the day;
Lean from your ſapphire thrones in kind reply,
And teach dull Earth what's muſic in the ſky.
Till, as your lyres lead on the Human race,
An *Halleluiah chorus* fills all ſpace!

Now, FRANCES, ſoft ſurround the Orphan's bed,
And ſcatter ſlumbers o'er his ſacred head;
Bright on your ſouls while inſpiration ſhine,
Ye ſhepherds, pipe ſome lullaby divine!

Lo! cradled in a manger, lowly lies
The Lord of earth, and Monarch of the ſkies.
What mean theſe wonders? mute the Heavenly quire,
They drop their harps, they gaze, they ſigh, admire.
Thus, HANDEL, thou—thy pupil rapt we deem,
Her voice too drops, for once, th' unequal theme.

Ye favour'd ſons of JACOB's royal line,
Sure all muſt welcome ſuch a boon divine?
Your palaces are open to embrace
This Shiloh of your hopes, the Prince of Peace?

Name not the fact!—thou, ſun, didſt veil thy fires,
Our ſpecies! bluſh for ever at your fires.

Now, FRANCES, give the throbbing pulſe full play,
A ſlowly-ſtepping, melancholy lay;
A lay where angels weep, where fiends revere,
To which e'en WOLCOT liſtens with a tear.
And O! for Pity's ever-ſtreaming eye;
And Sorrow's faultering voice, and heaving ſigh;
O! for Humility, devoid of art;
And O! the glance that broke poor PETER's heart,
To plead the cauſe which groaning Calvary pleads,
And tell the nations that a GODHEAD bleeds!

FINIS.

Printed by Mary Watson, Angel-yard, Cambridge.